DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 272 JC 900 131

AUTHOR Ritchey, Joyce A.; Starke, Diane J.
TITLE HERMANN: Holistic Evaluation Reading Magazines and Newspapers/Novels.
INSTITUTION El Paso Community Coll., Tex.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; Comparative Analysis; Hispanic Americans; Holistic Approach; Newspapers; Reading Ability; *Reading Achievement; *Reading Attitudes; *Reading Improvement; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Strategies; Teaching Methods; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

In 1988, a study was conducted to determine whether a holistic or an isolated skills approach is more effective in improving the reading abilities and attitudes toward reading of predominantly Hispanic community college students. The study sample consisted of two groups of developmental reading students. The majority of students in both groups were female Hispanics with reading abilities between the 8th and 10th grade levels. According to Nelson-Denny Reading Test scores, both groups had comparable reading abilities. Reading attitudes were tested using the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure. The first group consisted of 53 students who were taught the holistic approach to reading, using cognitive operations and thinking strategies. Class activities included reading and discussing news magazine and newspaper articles, writing in journals, and reading self-selected novels. The non-holistic group of 46 students used the regular college textbook adopted for the developmental reading course which emphasizes isolated skills. The holistic approach group showed 100% attitude improvement, while 75% of the non-holistic group showed improvement. The study was replicated the following semester with the addition of students reading from 10th to 12th grade levels. These students showed marked improvement with holistic instruction, though attitude improvement was slightly less than in the first study. The Holistic method was found to be a positive factor in reading gains of students at the 10th and 12th grade levels, while both teaching methods showed positive results for students at the 8th and 10th grade levels. (WJT)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316272

HERMANN: HOLISTIC EVALUATION READING MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS/NOVELS

Joyce A. Ritchey and Diane J. Starke
El Paso Community College

JC 900131

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J.A. Ritchey

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Joyce A. Ritchey and Diane J. Starke

El Paso Community College

The holistic approach teaches reading as a combination of skills rather than a series of isolated skills. In a few cases, this approach has utilized news magazines, newspapers, or novels as instructional materials for teaching college developmental reading students. Baechtold, et al (1986) finds news magazines versatile and a natural vehicle for teaching reading comprehension because each article may require a different combination of reading skills. Also, Frager and Thompson (1985) support the use of a news magazine in college developmental reading classes for developing the skills of summarizing, synthesizing, and critical thinking. Hayes (1987) reports that developmental reading students who used news magazines and a novel made significant improvements in reading comprehension. These students also discovered the success and pleasure of having read a complete novel. Ammann and Mittelsteadt (1987) state: "Students often approach standard skills materials carelessly and without interest. . .even interesting topics usually fail to involve students in the assignment." For these reasons, the authors began using the newspaper and highly recommend this approach for developing comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation. Beals (1984) reports that students who consistently used newspapers showed more positive changes in newspaper reading behavior, in attitudes toward newspapers and in their interest and knowledge of current events than did students who had little or no exposure to

newspapers in the classroom. Mazur-Stewart (1986) reports a statistically significant attitude improvement after exposure to popular paperback books.

Statement of the Problem

Reading, at a large Southwest community college, has been taught in developmental reading classes using the isolated skills approach. Students are not taught to think of reading as a combination of skills; they do not view reading as a holistic process. Different textbooks and a variety of lab materials have been used in developmental reading classes, but many students are unmotivated and uninterested. In addition, it is questionable that the skills taught in isolation do indeed transfer to "regular" reading materials.

As the review of literature indicates, others have found the holistic approach effective. However, there has been no research conducted on a comparison of the two teaching methods. This research attempted to answer the following questions:

1) Which method (holistic or isolated skills) will yield greater gains in reading achievement for predominantly Hispanic community college students?

2) Which method (holistic or isolated skills) will show greater improvement in students' attitudes toward reading for predominantly Hispanic community college students?

Procedures/Methods

HERMANN (Holistic Evaluation Reading Magazines and Newspapers/Novels), as the research project is entitled, consisted of two treatment groups of developmental reading students. The HERMANN group (n=53) was taught the holistic approach to reading using cognitive operations and thinking strategies in exposure to relevant local, national and international events, as well as individual students' special interests. The HERMANN classes met three times per week for fifty minutes each. Mondays were spent reading and discussing two news magazine articles; on Wednesdays, students wrote in a journal about their feelings concerning the course itself, various readings, and their self-selected novels. Students were not graded on their journal entries, but received credit. After writing in their journals, students engaged in sustained silent reading of their novels. Four newspaper articles were read and discussed in class on Fridays. Additionally, students were responsible for homework assignments which included two news magazine articles per week, four newspaper articles per week, and novel report(s). Comprehension exercises were not objective, but required the students to respond subjectively.

The NON-HERMANN group (n=46) also met Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for fifty minutes. They used the regular college textbook adopted for the developmental reading course which emphasizes isolated skills. These students also used the materials in the college reading laboratory. Mondays were spent teaching isolated skills, Wednesdays were a continuation of skills lessons and

discussion of homework, and Fridays were spent in the reading lab reading short passages answering multiple choice questions.

The majority of students in both groups consisted of female Hispanics between the ages of seventeen and nineteen. In addition, both groups were relatively comparable in their reading abilities at entry as measured by the Nelson-Denny Reading Test Form E (1981).

Students in both groups also completed a pre- and post-reading attitudinal questionnaire using the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure (1977).

Analysis of Data/Results

To account for initial differences between the groups, an analysis of covariance, on total scores only, was used to determine which teaching method was more effective. The dependent variable was the post-test with the pre-test as the covariate. The independent variable was the teaching method. The analysis of the results on the Nelson-Denny yielded an F-ratio of no significance at the .05 level. The treatment was not a factor in the reading gains made by either group. (See Table 1).

Paired t-tests were used to determine differences in mean attitudes on the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure. Means for the pre- and post- Mikulecky inventory showed significant gains in both treatment groups. For the HERMANN group, the mean on the pre-survey was 2.8 and 3.4 on the post-survey based on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most positive. The NON-HERMANN group mean

on the pre- was 3.0 and the post- was only 3.1 (See Table 2). In addition, the HERMANN group showed a 100% attitudinal improvement, while 75% of the NON-HERMANN students' attitudes improved.

Replication

Initially, both treatment groups were comprised of students reading between 8th and 10th grade level as measured by the Nelson-Denny Form E. The following semester, the study was replicated and students reading from 10th to 12th grade levels were added. Methodology, procedures, and data analysis remained the same. In the replication, for the students reading between 8th and 10th grade level, analysis of the results on the Nelson-Denny yielded an F ratio of 0.45, which is not statistically significant. (See Table 3). For the students reading between 10th and 12th grade level, analysis showed an F ratio of 9.45, which is significant at the .004 level. (See Table 4).

Paired t-tests from the Mikulecky survey showed significant changes in students' attitudes for both treatment groups regardless of reading level. 85% of the HERMANN students' attitudes improved, while 70% of the NON-HERMANN students showed attitudinal improvement. (See Table 5).

Conclusion/Implications

The findings of the first study indicate that students who read between 8th and 10th grade benefit from reading instruction using either the isolated skills or the holistic approach. Attitudes improved greatly in both treatment groups.

The results of the replication indicate that students reading between 10th and 12th grade levels improved markedly with holistic instruction. Attitudes improved in the replication, but were not as great as in the first study.

In deciding which methodology to use in college developmental reading courses, the important point made from this study is that HERMANN is more appropriate and successful with students who are reading at higher levels and that attitudes usually improve with any type of reading instruction.

TABLE 1

MEAN READING SCORES

(Grade Equivalents)

1988

	PRE:NELSON-DENNY E			POST:NELSON-DENNY F		
	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL
HERMANN:	8.8	7.8	8.4	10.5	11.2	10.9
NON-HERMANN:	9.5	7.5	8.6	10.2	10.7	10.5

EFFECT OF TREATMENT: F=2.10 (NOT SIGNIFICANT AT .05 LEVEL)

TABLE 2

1988

ATTITUDINAL SURVEY RESULTS

	PRE-MEAN	POST-MEAN
HERMANN:	2.76	3.35
NON-HERMANN:	2.98	3.13

(Scale: 1-5 with 5 being the most positive)

TABLE 3

MEAN READING SCORES

(Grade Equivalents)

1989

8TH TO 10TH GRADE LEVEL

	PRE: NELSON-DENNY E			POST: NELSON-DENNY F		
	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL
HERMANN:	8.5	8.3	8.4	9.8	12.0	10.9
NON-HERMANN:	9.6	8.3	9.1	11.3	11.4	11.6

EFFECT OF TREATMENT: F= 0.45 (NOT STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT)

TABLE 4

MEAN READING SCORES

(Grade Equivalents)

1989

10TH TO 12TH GRADE LEVEL

	PRE-NELSON-DENNY E			POST-NELSON-DENNY F		
	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL	VOC.	COMP.	TOTAL
HERMANN:	9.7	9.2	9.5	11.8	13.4	12.5
NON-HERMANN:	10.7	9.7	10.3	11.6	11.5	11.6

EFFECT OF TREATMENT: F= 9.45 (SIGNIFICANT AT THE .004 LEVEL)

TABLE 5

1989

ATTITUDINAL SURVEY RESULTS

	PRE-MEAN	POST-MEAN
HERMANN:	2.99	3.27
NON-HERMANN:	3.18	3.37

(Scale: 1-5 with 5 being the most positive)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ammann, R. & Mittelsteadt, S. (1987). Turning on turned off students: Using newspapers with senior high remedial readers. Journal of Reading, 30, 708-715.

Beals, P. E. (1984). The newspaper in the classroom: Some notes on recent research. Reading World, 23, 381-382.

Baechtold, S., Culross, T. O. & Gray, G. (1986). The news magazine in the college reading classroom. Journal of Reading, 29, 304-310.

Brown, J. I., Bennett, J. & Hanna, G. (1981). The Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Forms E and F). Lombard, Illinois: Riverside.

Frager, A. M. & Thompson, L. (1985). Teaching college study skills with a news magazine. Journal of Reading, 28, 404-407.

Hayes, C. G. (1987). Teaching basic reading to basic writers. Journal of Reading, 31, 100-108.

Mazur-Stewart, M. (1986). Bringing sustained silent reading to developmental readers. Journal of Developmental Education, 10, 20-22.

Mikulecky, L. (1977). Behavioral reading attitudinal measure. In M. Tonjes and M.V. Zintz, Teaching Reading, Thinking, and Study Skills in Content Areas. (pp. 384-386). Dubuque: William C. Brown.

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
MAR 29 1990